Why Social Security and Medicare Are Vital to Older Americans in Kansas

Social Security and Medicare provide income and health security to older Americans aged 65 and older. Growing debt burdens, dwindling pensions, and increasing health care costs make these programs more important than ever. Here’s what they do for Kansas.

Social Security in Kansas

Older Kansans count on Social Security benefits earned through a lifetime of work

- A total of 92 percent, or 362,172, of older Kansas residents received Social Security in 2012. The average annual benefit was $15,400.
- Social Security accounted for 55 percent of the typical older Kansan’s family income.
- Low- and middle-income older adults in Kansas are even more reliant on Social Security’s earned benefit, typically receiving 79 percent of their family income from Social Security.

Social Security keeps middle-income older Kansans from falling into poverty

- Census data show about 7 percent, or 25,222, of older Kansans living in poverty.
- Without Social Security income, an additional 40 percent of older Kansans, or 148,066 people, would fall into poverty.

Social Security plays an important role in Kansas’s economy

- Social Security provided $7.1 billion in benefits to all Kansans and $5.5 billion in benefits to Kansans aged 65 and older in 2012.

Medicare in Kansas

Medicare provides guaranteed health coverage, but out-of-pocket costs are high

- On average, Kansas’s Medicare beneficiaries spent an estimated $4,121 on out-of-pocket health care costs in 2012.
- In 2012, older Kansas adults enrolled in Medicare spent, on average, an estimated 13 percent of their income on out-of-pocket health care costs.

Medicare provides peace of mind for older Kansans

- Nearly 97 percent of older Kansans were enrolled in Medicare in 2011.

Medicare plays an important role in Kansas’s economy

- The Medicare program spent an estimated $3.3 billion on health care services for 382,723 older Kansans in 2012.